

# **Mastery-Based Education: A National Perspective**

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# Goals

- ⌘ Build understanding of what mastery-based education looks like and why it's compelling, and
- ⌘ Address frequently-asked questions on how to design and implement mastery-based education.

# What does a mastery-based education system look like?

A project of  
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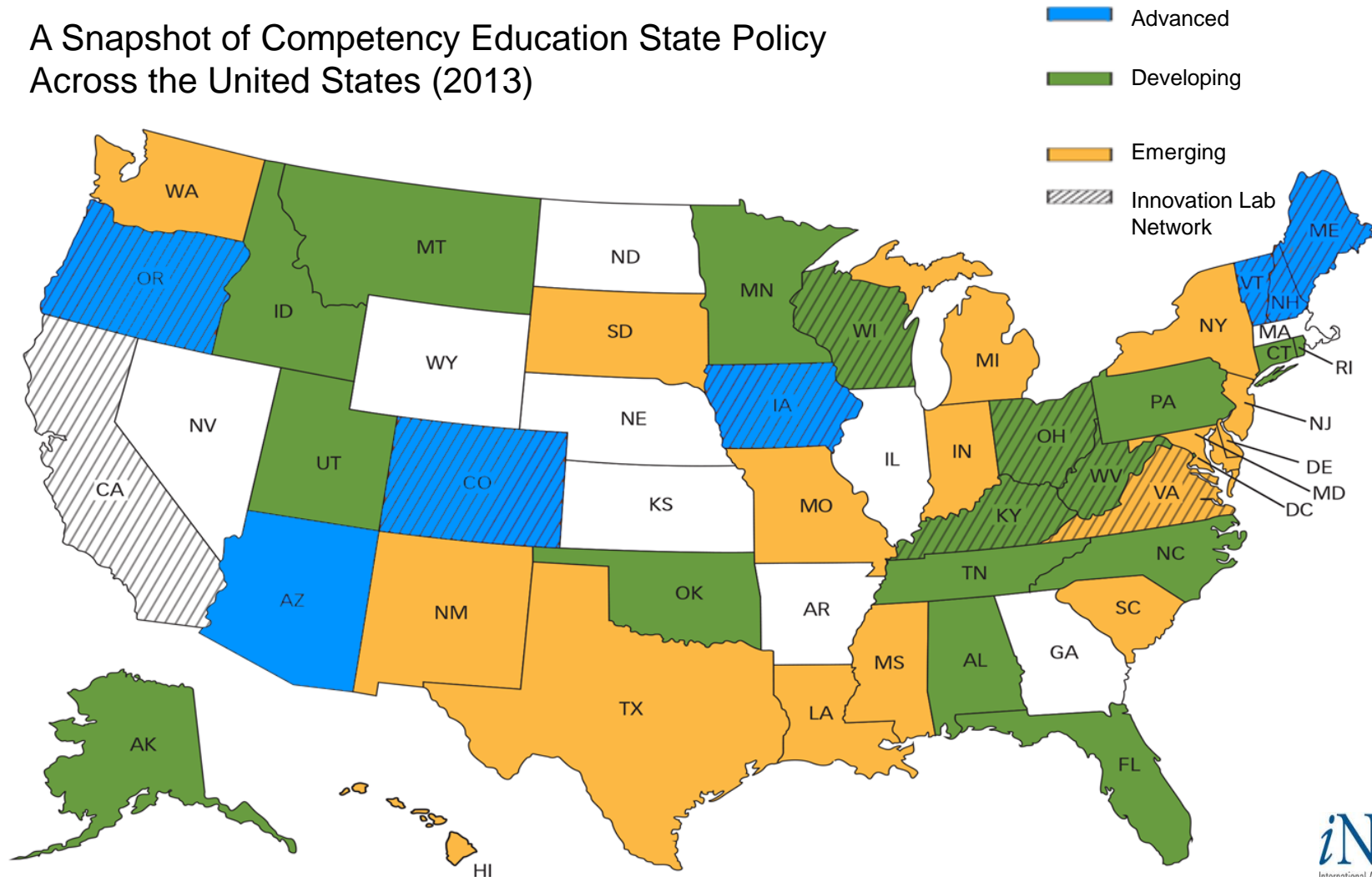
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# What can we learn from other states?

## A Snapshot of Competency Education State Policy Across the United States (2013)



# What is a “mastery-based education system?”

- ⌘ Idaho definition: “An education system where student progress is based upon a student's demonstration of mastery of competencies and content, not seat time or the age or grade level of the student.” (House Bill 110)
- ⌘ Similar to:

**MASTERY-BASED  
COMPETENCY-BASED  
PROFICIENCY-BASED**

# What is a “mastery-based education system”

...to which we suggest other key ingredients:

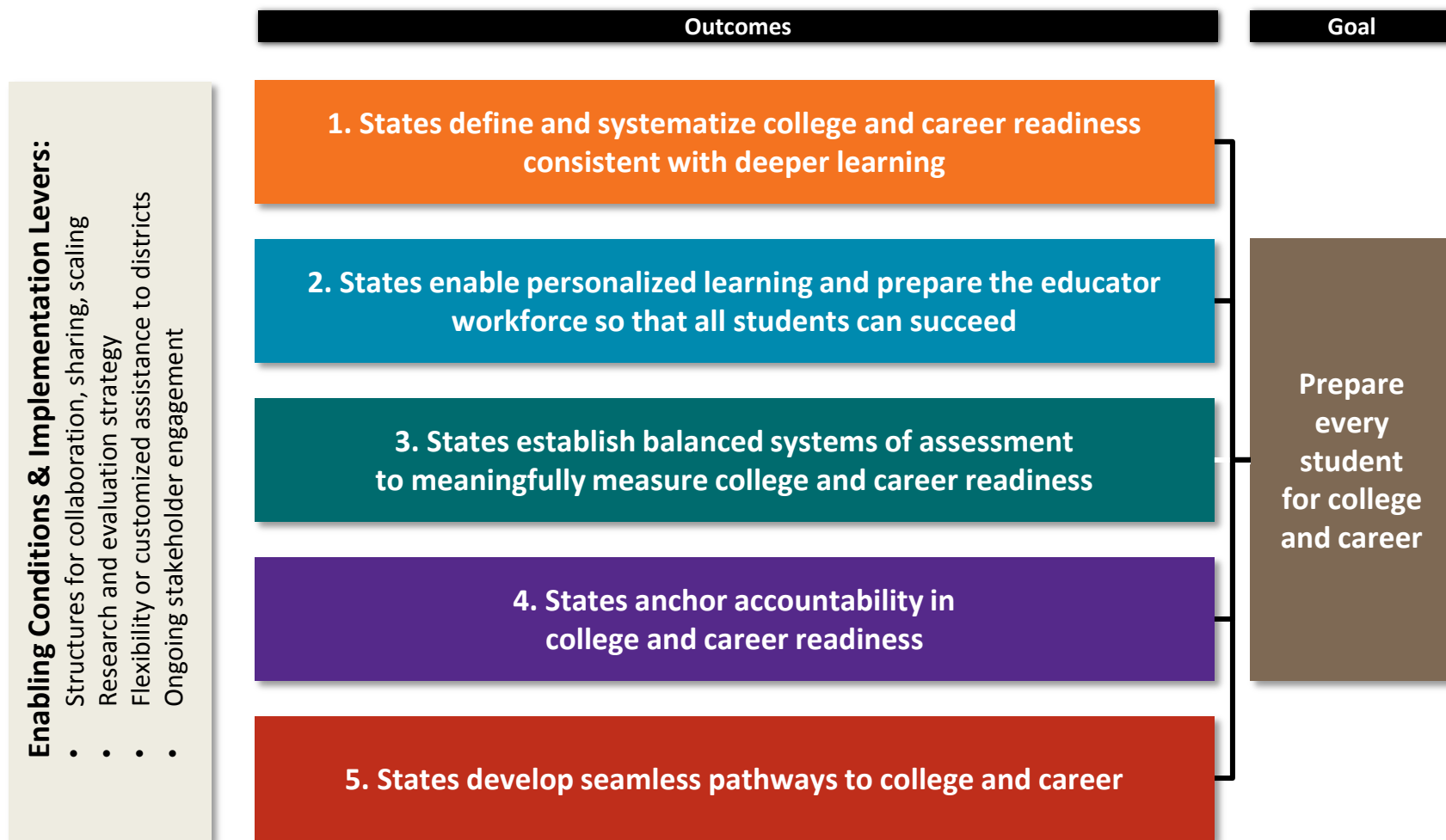


# Questions for districts considering mastery-based education:

- ⌘ **What are the learning targets or competencies** that best represent the skills and knowledge students are expected to master? What is the relationship between the program or school's learning targets and state standards?
- ⌘ How, and how often, will student progress toward learning targets be assessed? What kinds of **interim benchmarks and formative assessments** will be needed?
- ⌘ How will students **demonstrate mastery**?
- ⌘ How will teachers and students **track progress**? What kinds of learning management systems, adapted grade-books, and student-managed tracking tools will be needed?
- ⌘ How will the program **grade and award credit**?
- ⌘ How can the system, once developed, be **clearly communicated** to students, families and other stakeholders?

*Source: "Making Mastery Work," Nellie Mae Education Foundation*

# What State Policies, Practices, and Structures Support Mastery-Based Systems?





# Why is this kind of system compelling?

- ⌘ Students are neither lost nor bored, but **learning is optimally paced** and provides what they need in-the-moment.
- ⌘ Students aren't passed along grade to grade despite missing large swaths of information; they are asked to **keep working until they can demonstrate mastery** of each critical concept or competency.
- ⌘ Students' learning gaps aren't ignored. With real-time data and technological supports, **students and teachers know exactly what students have and have not mastered**, and can build from there.
- ⌘ Learning isn't something done to students; students take **greater ownership and investment** in their education because learning is relevant and connected to their interests.
- ⌘ Students don't just learn academic facts; they **develop skills and dispositions important to their futures** such as problem solving, collaboration, communication, initiative, and self-determination

# Does it work?



## **AK: Chugach School District**

- State test scores rose from bottom quartile to the 72nd percentile.
- Participation in college entrance exams rose from zero to 70%.
- Teacher turnover dropped to 2% from 55%.



## **MA: Boston Day and Evening Academy**

- ⌘ 90% passed MCAS in ELA even though 55% began with less than eighth-grade reading skills.
- ⌘ 80% passed MCAS in math even though 63% began with less than eighth-grade math skills.



## **CA: Lindsay Unified School District**

- Proficiency increased 9% in ELA, 4% in math, and 14% in science.
- Scores on the state's API increased from 644 to 691.
- Suspension rates dropped 41% and gang membership fell from 18% to 3%.

# What do parents and teachers think?

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# QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



# Contact Information

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